

# ZONE MODA JOURNAL 7 FASHION AND CELEBRITY CULTURE

Body spectacle and the enlarged  
sphere of show business

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For more than a century, the fashion industry and fashion marketing have actively participated in the enormous and progressive expansion of show business' sphere of action, expression, behavior, and texts (an expansion further stretched - in the new millennium - by you tube, social networks, video games, and the domestication of entertainment). The last two decades have been marked by the dissemination, availability, and spreading of information about fashion products, fashion sites and events, and, most of all, of fashion personalities (designers, models, art directors, publicists). This availability of fashion imagination and consumption has intermingled with other practices and pleasures of show business, from filmmaking to red carpets. Conflating with movie watching, awarding, publicity, and gossip, the viewers' expanded attention to fashion items has had a great impact on the general notion of what public personalities are and what they look like. It has contributed to inflate the interest in celebrities and to enlarge the number of celebrities. It has exploded the ambition and desire of the hitherto unknown to increase their own public self-exposure, enlarging spectators' experience of leisure and spectacle and the spaces of entertainment.

At the same time, celebrities can be generated outside the world of the show business and instead turn a crime, a scientific discovery, a political statement into entertainment and spectacle. The artist-as-celebrity, going back to Oscar Wilde if not earlier, has been joined by the artist as fashion celebrity, a phenomenon that arguably started with Andy Warhol, while the past twenty years have seen the emergence of the sporting 'fashion celebrity'; musicians from every genre can be part of the new fashion spectacle, if they are suitably photogenic. The general attractiveness of a myriad kind of celebrities, hybrid, hardly definable, open to dispute, has inflated and rendered more visible the sphere of entertainment. Similarly, fashion was born when couture inhabited restricted, private, and aristocratic conclaves: now expertise about clothing, style and image creation has entered the sphere of spectacle and entertainment. Fashion creates images and codes through which celebrities are conceived and exposed, reproduced. Fashion forges the celebrity text. In the new millennium "Our lives, our intellect, our religion, our creativity, our sexuality are all the vocabulary of fashion and are open for renegotiation and representation. Yet we view fashion as suspect, insubstantial, the stuff of dreams not reality" (Changing Fashion: A Critical Introduction to Trend Analysis and Meaning' Annette Lynch, Mitchell Strauss, p. 1 ). This could also be said of contemporary celebrity, which shares

with fashion an ambivalent status, halfway between materiality and insubstantiality, where narration plays a pivotal role.

The general public's enjoyment, contempt, and denigration of celebrities is based on personal narratives: stories about celebrities' private lives, about their bodies and apparatuses: aesthetic surgery, clothes, technologies... This journal issue devoted to celebrity and fashion investigates the modes of verbal and visual narrations revolving around attractive personalities. How does this narrative factor, which supports the celebrity system, operate within and influence the world of fashion, and how have the stories about fashion (films, biographies, but also publicity, gossip, events, spaces, architecture) influenced the world of show business? To tackle the intriguing relationship between fashion and celebrity culture, we suggest the following topics:

Influence, masses, populism: democratization of fashion, democratization of celebrity: Conflicts and ambivalences between notions of ordinariness vs. exceptionality. Discourse about audiences as agents in the making of meanings concerning celebrities. Fashion seen as a vehicle of the mass appropriation of the means of construction of the celebrity's image.

Success, achievement, publicity: Fashion publicity, fashion branding and the culture of the branded self. Public versus private life, aristocratic exclusiveness versus egalitarianism.

Sponsorship and Internet celebrities: Wide access to celebrity information through the social media: how does this generate new kinds of sponsorship on part of fashion brands? How do Internet personalities negotiate between their performance of authenticity and their fashion endorsement?

Historical roots and new celebrities: How is 20th century prototypes, i.e. the rock-star or the classical Hollywood star, influencing the culture of celebrity? Do new forms of celebrity (micro-celebrity, anti-celebrity, subcultural-celebrity...) correspond to new styles and new circulation of fashion trends? Old and new atypical star bodies: their impact on fashion bodily stylizations. Fashion professionals turning into celebrities.

Character versus Film Persona. Film and television characters' fashion styles interact with actors/actresses' public personas. Are there celebrity icons who have become style icons due to their fictional characterizations more than their public

appearance?

Taste, disgust, anti-celebrity: Celebrities as models of good or bad taste. Bad taste condemnation influencing the aesthetic canon. Anti-canon and celebrities' social connotation (celebrity chav, rich kids...). Anti-celebrity as a result of anti-fashion styles. How does a celebrity's repudiation of a luxury style affect critical consumption? Style icons turning into celebrities: how does taste capital" is transformed into "celebrity capital"?

Cumbersome celebrities and fashion fails: Celebrities might become detrimental to fashion brands: scandals can induce both rejection and employment of a testimonial. How do fashion brands react to celebrities' lapses of style and fashion fails? Do these fall downs contribute to the construction of a celebrity?

Abstracts of no more than 1000 words + 5 bibliographical references (word-, doc format), written either in Italian or English, are to be sent to: [zonemodajournal@unibo.it](mailto:zonemodajournal@unibo.it)  
Abstract acceptance does not guarantee publication of the article, which will be submitted to a double-blind peer-review process. The length of the article should be comprised between 6000 / 7000 words.

Important dates:  
- abstract submission deadline: June, 15, 2017  
- notification of acceptance/rejection: June, 30, 2017 (notice of acceptance might include comments and requests of explanations)  
- full-length paper submission deadline: September, 20, 2017  
- comments of the reviewers will be conveyed together with the reviewers' decision (approval with no changes, approval with major/minor changes, rejection) by October, 16, 2017  
- authors shall send the improved article to the editorial staff by November, 6, 2017.

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